

Map for tonight

1. Opening devotion
2. Review, reflections, questions, insights, etc. on Bible readings
3. Review of Introduction of Bible Material.
4. Daniel's reflection on concept of "Covenant"
5. Compline

Hebrew Origins and Early History

Sources: Fant, Chapter 5 pp. 97- 119

Suggested Biblical Readings: Moses Saga

Israel's Ancestral Stories

- Genesis 1-11
 - Religious affirmations about the beginnings of the world.
 - Figure 5.2 (p.98) Major Periods of Israel's History
- Ancestors: Genesis 12- 50
 - Abraham-Sarah narrative
 - Promise from God to Abraham
 - A & S leave home, eventually to Egypt
 - 2 covenant –making ceremonies (Chapter 15 & 17)
 - Birth of Issac, test of faith, God will always provide
 - Jacob- Esau narrative
 - Rivalry between 2 brothers
 - Struggle with angel
 - Father of the 12 tribes
 - Joseph narrative
 - Story of Joseph and brothers
 - More polished literary document
 - More on Joe than God

Characteristics of Hebrew Ancestral Narratives

1. Oral tradition – tribal storytellers
2. Interweaving of several older traditions
 - P weaves J & E together to form one unified narrative
3. Actions of leaders and clan as whole
4. Hebrew past in perspective of God's Actions
5. Define Hebrews in relation to other peoples of the Near East
 - Story of Israel as people of Yahweh
6. Confess the Hebrew understanding of the divine-human encounter

Ancestral World

Movement in Fertile Crescent:

Sumerians (3200 BC), Mari, Amorite(1800 BC), -> Hammurabi (1768-1686 BC),
Mitanni (1500-1370 BC), Hittites (1200 BC), Arameans(1100 BC), Habiru (1000 BC?)

Story in Genesis 12 –50 God was working in Hebrew history

Ancestral Religion

- Seems to include the worship of separate clan deities
- May have certain elements of Canaanite religion
- Establishment of covenant relationships with their god
- God's participation in concrete events in history, the tasks and conflicts of human life.

Exodus and Wilderness Traditions

- More firmly set in history than the ancestral narratives
- Oppression of Jacob's descendants
- Moses senses himself as Hebrew
- 1st appearance to Pharaoh = harsher treatment of Hebrew slaves
- Yahweh leads the Israelites to escape
- Deliverance from Sea of Reeds
- Escape narrative
- Map p.111, Fig.5.8

Characteristics of Exodus-Wilderness Narratives

- Largely devoted to laws and lists
- Transmission of Israel's culture
- Not mentioned in any Egyptian text
- God's deliverance is fundamental to faith
- When did it happen?
- ~ 1290 BC
- Where is Mt. Sinai?
- How many people?

Moses' religion

1. Concept of God: Name of God
2. Understanding of Covenant: parity covenant, suzerainty covenant
3. Institution of the Law: codes of Israel law

Elements of Mosaic Cult

1. Worship God through sacrifice
2. Use of the Ark of the Covenant
3. Tent of meeting
4. Formal priesthood

God not aloof to human struggle but God who is active within social struggle, guiding and shaping the course of human affairs.

Gift to be received as gratitude.